

REMARKS

This Response is submitted in reply to the Office Action mailed on August 9, 2006. Claims 1 to 6, 13, 14, 21, 24, 28 to 32, 38, 44, and 47 have been amended. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

Applicants are submitting herewith a petition for a one-month extension of time. Please charge Deposit Account No. 02-1818 to cover the cost of the one-month extension of time and any other fees due in connection with this Response.

The Office Action rejected Claims 1 to 47 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent Application No. 2003/0216162 to Vancura ("Vancura") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,309,300 to Glavich ("Glavich"). Applicants respectfully disagree with these rejections. Nevertheless, Applicants have amended certain of the claims for clarification purposes.

Vancura discloses a gaming device which includes a plurality of masked selections. Each of the masked selections is associated with a hidden attribute, such as a credit value award, a multiplier, or a number of additional picks. At least one of the selections is associated with more than one attribute (i.e., a selection may be associated with both a credit value award and a number of additional picks). In operation, the gaming device provides the player with an initial number of picks and enables the player to select any one of the masked selections using one of the provided picks. The gaming device reveals the attribute(s) associated with the picked selection and provides the revealed attribute(s) to the player. Once a selection is picked and the associated attribute or attributes are revealed, that selection is no longer available for selection (See Paragraph [0023]). In one example, the gaming device provides the player with three initial picks in the game, and the player uses the first pick to select a selection. The player has two picks remaining in the game. If the picked selection is associated with a credit award and a number of additional picks (e.g., 2 additional picks), the player now has 4 picks remaining in the game (i.e., the 3 initial picks, minus the 1 picked used to select the selection, plus the 2 additional picks awarded). Thus, after the player picks a selection, the gaming device provides the player with the

associated credit award and adds any additional picks associated with the player-selected selection to the player's picks remaining (See Paragraph [0024]).

Glavich discloses a bonus game having a plurality of selections which are displayed to a player. Each of the selections is associated with an item, such as a prize amount, a demerit, a number of additional picks, or a multiplier. The player receives an initial number of picks with which to select a certain number of the selections. For each of the provided picks, the player selects one of the selections which has not previously been picked (Col. 6, lines 19 to 20). After the player picks a selection, the gaming device reveals the item (if any) associated with the picked selection. The gaming device implements the item in the bonus game. If a selected selection is associated with a demerit, the gaming device decreases the prize amount by the appropriate amount (See Col. 6, lines 36 to 46). The player continues selecting selections until there are no picks remaining.

The Office Action admits that Vancura does not teach, disclose or suggest displaying the accumulation of a plurality of the components (See Office Action, page 4). The Office Action attempts to remedy the deficiencies of Vancura with Glavich. The Office Action concludes that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to include displaying the accumulation of the various awards, as taught by Glavich, in the gaming device of Vancura in order to inform the player of the currently obtained awards.

Applicants respectfully submit that, regardless of whether it would have been obvious to modify Vancura in the manner proposed by the Office Action, the combination of Vancura and Glavich does not teach every element or render obvious the gaming device of amended independent Claim 1. More specifically, the combination of Vancura and Glavich does not render obvious a gaming device which includes a processor programmed for a play of the game to: (a) generate at least one accumulated award opportunity by causing a selection of at least one of the award components during said play of the game and combining the award components selected during said play of the game; and (b) after combining the selected award components of the at least

one accumulated award opportunity, cause an indication of at least two of the award opportunities including the at least one generated accumulated award opportunity, and enable the player to choose one of the indicated award opportunities.

On page 5 of the Office Action, the Office Action states that in a play of the game in Vancura, when an award opportunity (e.g., globe position 4) is selected, an accumulated award opportunity is generated by combining an award component (e.g., 2 extra picks) to any previously accumulated award component (e.g., the player's current number of picks remaining, such as 1 pick left). As discussed above, in Vancura, the player selects award opportunities (or globe positions) from the plurality of award opportunities. If any of the player-selected globe positions is associated with a number of extra picks, those extra picks are accumulated or added to any picks remaining in the game. Thus, even assuming that the game of Vancura includes an accumulated award opportunity as interpreted by the Office Action, such an accumulated award opportunity is generated by combining an award component to any previously accumulated award component after a player has selected one of the globe positions or award opportunities.

Moreover, once the player in Vancura picks a globe position and the associated award or number of picks is added to a player's current award or number of picks (i.e., once an accumulated award opportunity is generated, according to the Office Action's interpretation), that globe position is no longer available to be picked by the player.

In the gaming device of amended independent Claim 1, on the other hand, the accumulated award opportunity is not generated after (or as a result of) a player's selection. Rather, the processor is programmed for a play of the game to generate at least one accumulated award opportunity by causing a selection of at least one of the award components during the play of the game and combining the award components selected during the play of the game. After the processor combines the selected award components of the at least one accumulated award opportunity, the processor causes an indication of at least two of the award opportunities including the generated accumulated award opportunity, and enables the player to choose one of the indicated award opportunities. Therefore, after an accumulated award opportunity is generated in

the play of the game, the player has the chance to subsequently select that accumulated award opportunity.

Unlike amended independent Claim 1, Vancura does not teach, disclose, or suggest a gaming device which includes a processor programmed for a play of the game to: (a) generate at least one accumulated award opportunity by causing a selection of at least one of the award components during said play of the game and combining the award components selected during said play of the game; and (b) after combining the selected award components of the at least one accumulated award opportunity, cause an indication of at least two of the award opportunities including the at least one generated accumulated award opportunity, and enable the player to choose one of the indicated award opportunities. Combining Vancura with Glavich does not render obvious a gaming device which includes this element. Accordingly, for at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent Claim 1 and the claims depending therefrom are each patentably distinguished over the combination of Vancura and Glavich.

Amended independent Claims 24 and 47 each include certain similar elements to amended independent Claim 1. For reasons similar to those discussed above with respect to amended independent Claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent Claims 24 and 47 and the claims depending therefrom are each patentably distinguished over the combination of Vancura and Glavich.

An earnest endeavor has been made to place this application in condition for allowance and is courteously solicited. If the Examiner has any questions related to this Response, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the undersigned to discuss this Response.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: December 4, 2006